

uses the funds to increase aid to college students and reduce the interest rates they must pay on their loans. It halves interest rates on subsidized student loans, from 6.8 percent to 3.4 percent, over 4 years and increases the Pell grant by \$1,090 increase in the maximum Pell grant award over 5 years. It also allows for a flexible repayment option and loan forgiveness after 10 years for certain public-sector employees.

I am also proud that the conference report included language to fund key Massachusetts Upward Bound programs. Upward Bound provides fundamental support and college preparation for low-income students and has a strong record of increasing the rate at which low-income students graduate from institutions of higher learning. Once the President signs this legislation into law, 187 new and existing Upward Bound programs that scored above a 70 in the most recent grant competition will be funded from fiscal year 2008 to fiscal year 2011. As a result, Upward Bound services will be provided for an additional 12,000 students. I want to congratulate all of the new and refunded Upward Bound programs in my State—Holyoke Community College, North Shore Community College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Suffolk University and Wheelock College. Thank you for providing these necessary services to Massachusetts students and I urge you to keep up the good work.

This legislation is absolutely vital to securing the opportunity of higher education for all and making our country more competitive. I thank Senator KENNEDY for his hard work and vision and I wholeheartedly support this legislation.

#### MATTHEW SHEPARD ACT

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On the night of September 1, 2007, Josie Smith-Malave, her sister Julie Smith, and her friend Emily Durwood, were attacked outside a Long Island bar for being gay. The three women had been at the bar that night, and, as they left, they were followed outside by three women and about nine men. The group of about a dozen young adults began to crowd around the three women, shouting antigay slurs, throwing sticks and cups at them and spitting on them. The group then began to punch and kick the three women. One of the victims suffered a head injury, another suffered a knee injury, and all three were badly bruised as a result of

the attack. The attackers fled the scene before police arrived, but one man was arrested 4 days later for his alleged involvement in the assault, which included stealing a camera from and injuring one of the women. He is charged with a hate-biased crime.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Matthew Shepard Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

#### TRIBUTE TO DONNA PAGANO MURRAY

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to bid farewell to one of the longest tenured members of my Senate staff, Mrs. Donna Pagano Murray. Donna retired from the Senate on September 5, 2007, after 28 years of exceptional service to the citizens of this country and to the residents of the State of Alaska.

Donna was born in New York City and studied at Monmouth University and the University of Maryland. She served as my executive assistant and was responsible for all legislative issues relating to domestic aviation and transportation security since I entered the Senate in 2002. She is an expert in Alaska aviation issues and a champion for the Age 60 pilot age extension bill. Donna served as my Chief of Staff for the past year, leading a great team working for Alaska.

Prior to working for me, she worked for Senator Frank Murkowski for 12 years. Among other duties in that office, including those I just mentioned, she was the principal liaison between his Washington, DC and five state offices.

She left the Senate in 1989 and worked at the Department of Commerce for five years during the Administration of former President George H.W. Bush. She handled issues such as clean water and air, fisheries management, weather services and appropriations issues for the Department.

I also want to mention that during her tenure in the Senate, she worked on the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Services and the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. She has volunteered for several campaigns and inaugural ceremonies as well.

Donna started her career as a high school teacher, and is looking forward to being a substitute teacher in her post-Senate life. This says a lot about her—that she is returning to the classroom to help children in this area. Rather than seeking a high-paying private sector job, which she certainly is qualified for given her abilities and experiences, she is going to be a substitute school teacher for a local district. She represents the real spirit of public service by giving back some of her knowledge, wisdom and experience gained from decades in government

service to the youngsters of this area. I know that the students will learn a lot from Donna.

While I am sorry to lose one of my staff leaders, I am delighted that Donna will be able to more fully enjoy time with her husband Danny. Danny had a heart transplant last year and I know that they are looking forward to spending more time with each other, traveling together and enjoying their grandchildren.

I will miss Donna's cheerfulness, wonderful smile, straightforward manner, vast knowledge, and her dedication to the Senate. She is a hard worker, indeed. It has been a pleasure to have her on my staff. I wish her and her husband Danny the very best and know that Alaskans will benefit for decades to come from her efforts to help the State. I also know that future generations will benefit from her return to the classroom.

Donna, thank you for your service to Alaska and this country.

#### THE PASSING OF PRESIDENT JAMES FAUST

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a revered Utahn who was taken from us a little more than a month ago during our summer recess: President James Esdras Faust, second counselor in the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On August 10, President Faust peacefully passed away, called home by the God whom he had served for 87 years. He left behind a legacy of faith and service, an example to which we should all strive for in our own lives.

President Faust was a wonderful leader for the LDS Church and a tremendous counselor to its President, Gordon B. Hinckley. He was a great friend and guide to Elaine and me, and our entire family, and to millions of others around the world. He was a person of great dimension, wide-ranging abilities, and deeply spiritual capacities. He was the consummate gentleman and treated both Elaine and me with kindness unfeigned. We pray that everyone in the Faust family will be comforted in the days and months ahead with peace through their memories of this great man.

Beyond his day-to-day duties as a church leader, President Faust led opposition to gambling initiatives in Utah, oversaw construction of the BYU Jerusalem Center, managed an improved public relations strategy for the church, and enhanced relationships with foreign officials. During his ministry, he saw the Latter-day Saint faith move from primarily one of the western United States to a truly worldwide religion.

His kindness was not limited to those of his own faith, nor was his service limited to that which he performed inside his church. Before President Hinckley extended him a call to serve 35 years ago as a senior, full-time